



# Fire Protection of Residential Floors

## Per PA Act 1 of 2011 and the Uniform Construction Code



On April 25, 2011, Pennsylvania Governor Tom Corbett signed into law Act 1 of 2011 ([HB 377, PN 1520](#)), which made a number of changes to Pennsylvania's Uniform Construction Code. One of the main features of this Act repealed the sprinkler requirements for one- and two-family dwellings that went into effect with the 2009 International Residential Code.

While the requirements for sprinklers in one- and two-family dwellings were repealed, additional requirements were added to the Uniform Construction Code that will protect floor assemblies in the absence of a sprinkler system. This requirement applies to all building permits issued on or after April 25, 2011.

A summary of these requirements is listed below:

**Any floor assembly not required in the International Residential Code (IRC) to be fire-resistance rated, shall be provided with a 1/2 inch gypsum wallboard membrane, 5/8 in wood structural panel membrane, or equivalent, on the underside of the floor framing member.**

Exceptions:

- 1) A floor assembly located directly over a space protected by an automatic sprinkler system in accordance with IRC Section P2904, NFPA 13D or other equivalent sprinkler system approved by the Building Code Official.
- 2) A floor assembly located directly over a crawl space not intended for storage or fuel-fired appliances.
- 3) A portion of a floor assembly which complies with all of the following:
  - a) The aggregate area of the unprotected portions shall not exceed 80 square feet per story.
  - b) Fire blocking in accordance with IRC Section R302.11.1 shall be installed along the perimeter of the unprotected portion to separate the unprotected portion from the remainder of the floor assembly.
- 4) A wood floor assembly using dimension lumber or structural composite lumber equal to or greater than two-inch nominal dimension or a floor assembly approved by the Building Code Official demonstrating equivalent fire performance.